

CHANDRAHASA

Chandrasahsa was born a prince but fate had decreed that he become an orphan and live on the streets. However, he had one great strength, his faith in Vishnu. Repeated attempts on his life by the wicked Dushtabuddhi failed and eventually the young prince got what was his right. The story of Chandrasahsa has been taken from the Jaimini Bharata which is said to have been written by a disciple of Vyasa called Jaimini.

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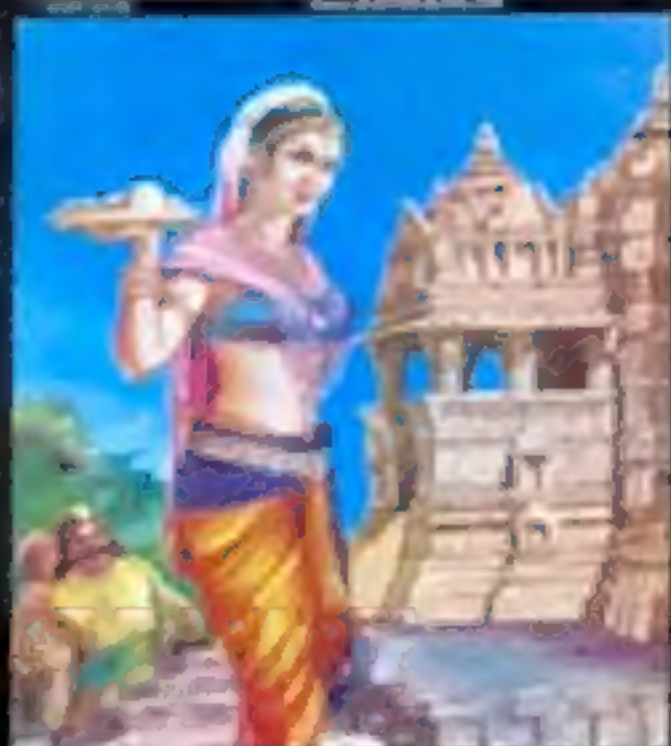
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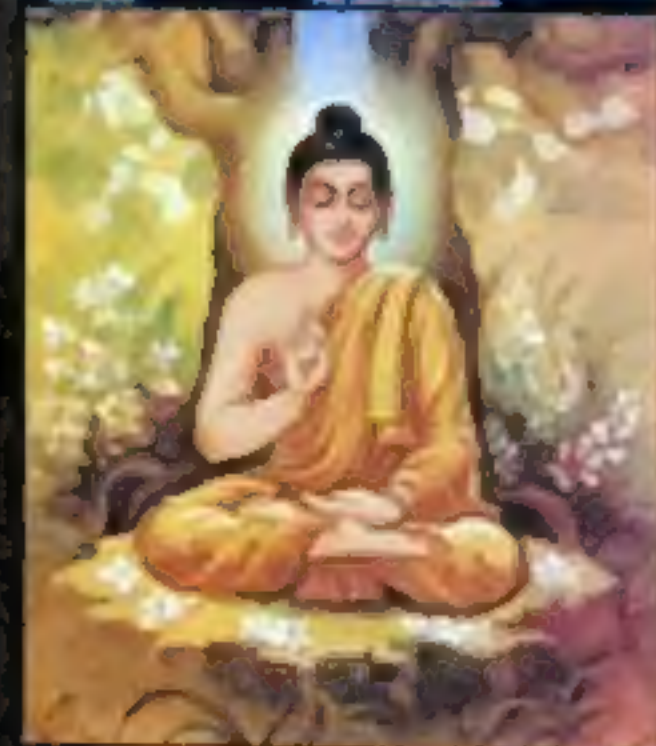
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CHANDRAHASA



KING MEDHAVI HAD NO CHILDREN. HE PRAYED TO LORD VISHNU TO GRANT HIM A SON. HIS PRAYER WAS HEARD AND THE QUEEN GAVE BIRTH TO A BABY BOY.

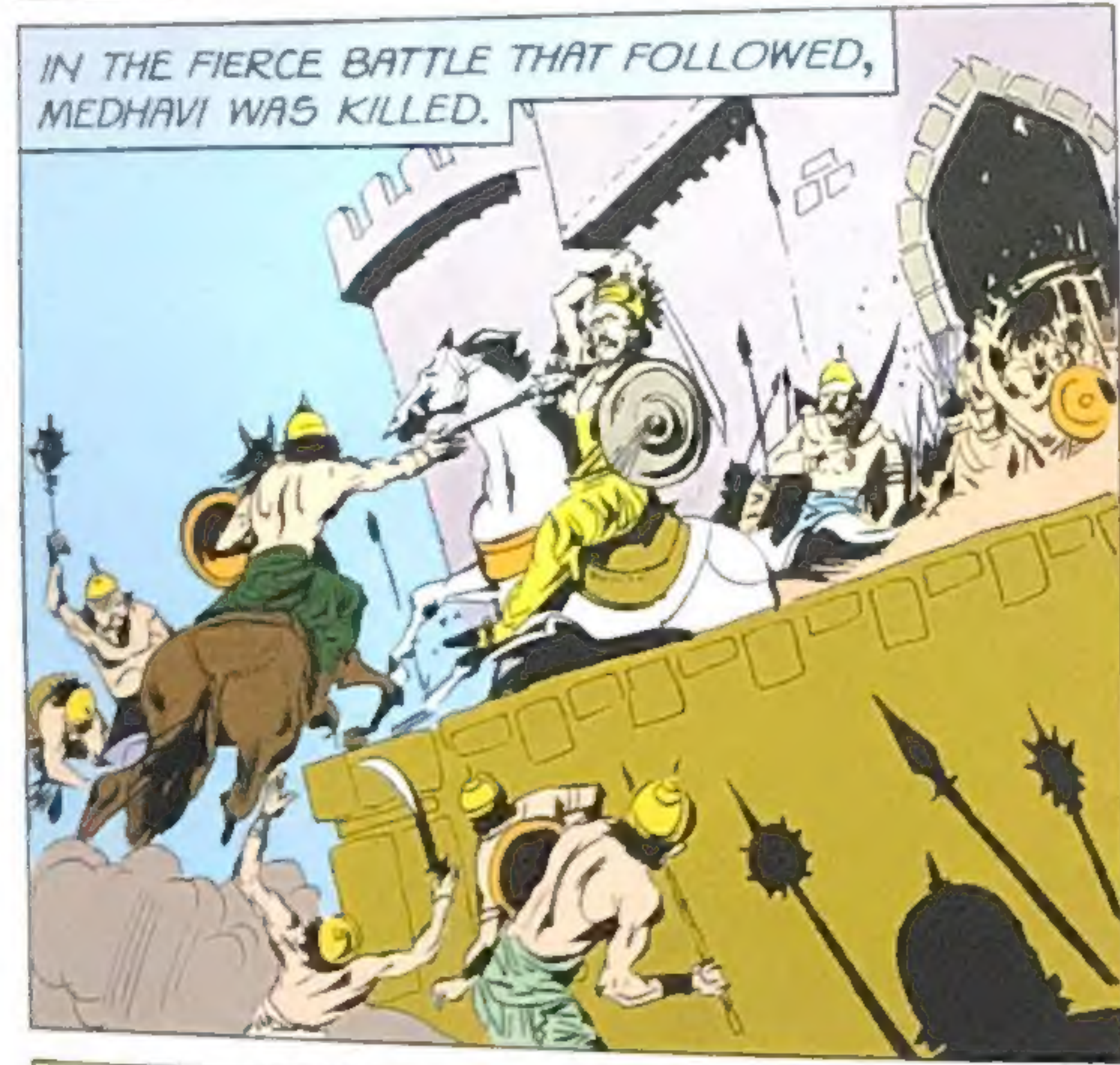


A MONTH LATER —

MAHARAJ!
OUR ENEMIES
HAVE SURROUND-
ED THE FORT!



RALLY
OUR MEN.
WE WILL
GIVE THEM
A FITTING
REPLY.



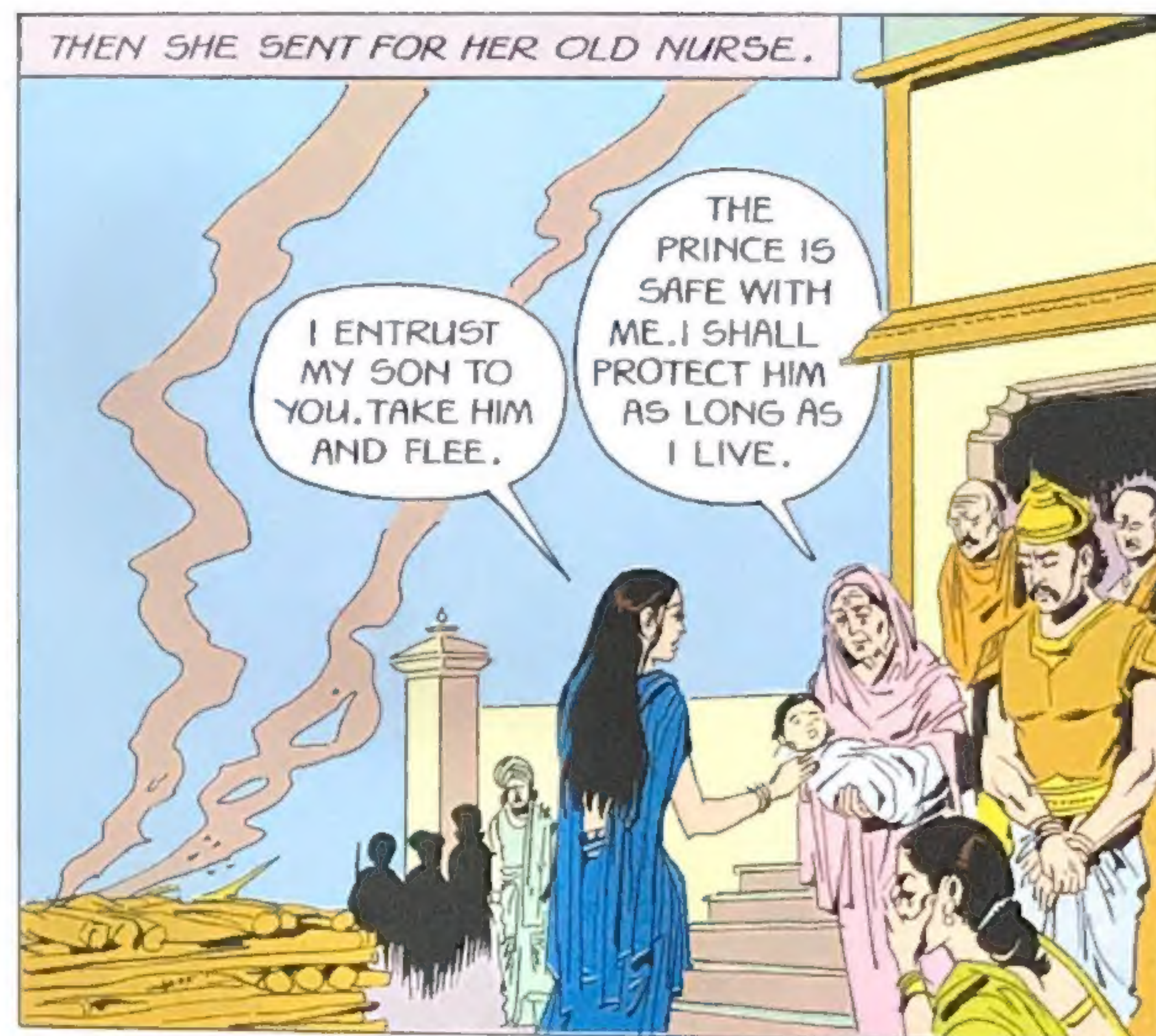
IN THE FIERCE BATTLE THAT FOLLOWED,
MEDHAVI WAS KILLED.



WHEN THE NEWS OF HIS
DEATH REACHED THE QUEEN—
NO! NO! MY SON!



OH, MY DARLING SON, I MUST
JOIN YOUR FATHER. MAY
LORD VISHNU PROTECT
YOU FROM HARM.



THEN SHE SENT FOR HER OLD NURSE.

I ENTRUST
MY SON TO
YOU. TAKE HIM
AND FLEE.

THE
PRINCE IS
SAFE WITH
ME. I SHALL
PROTECT HIM
AS LONG AS
I LIVE.

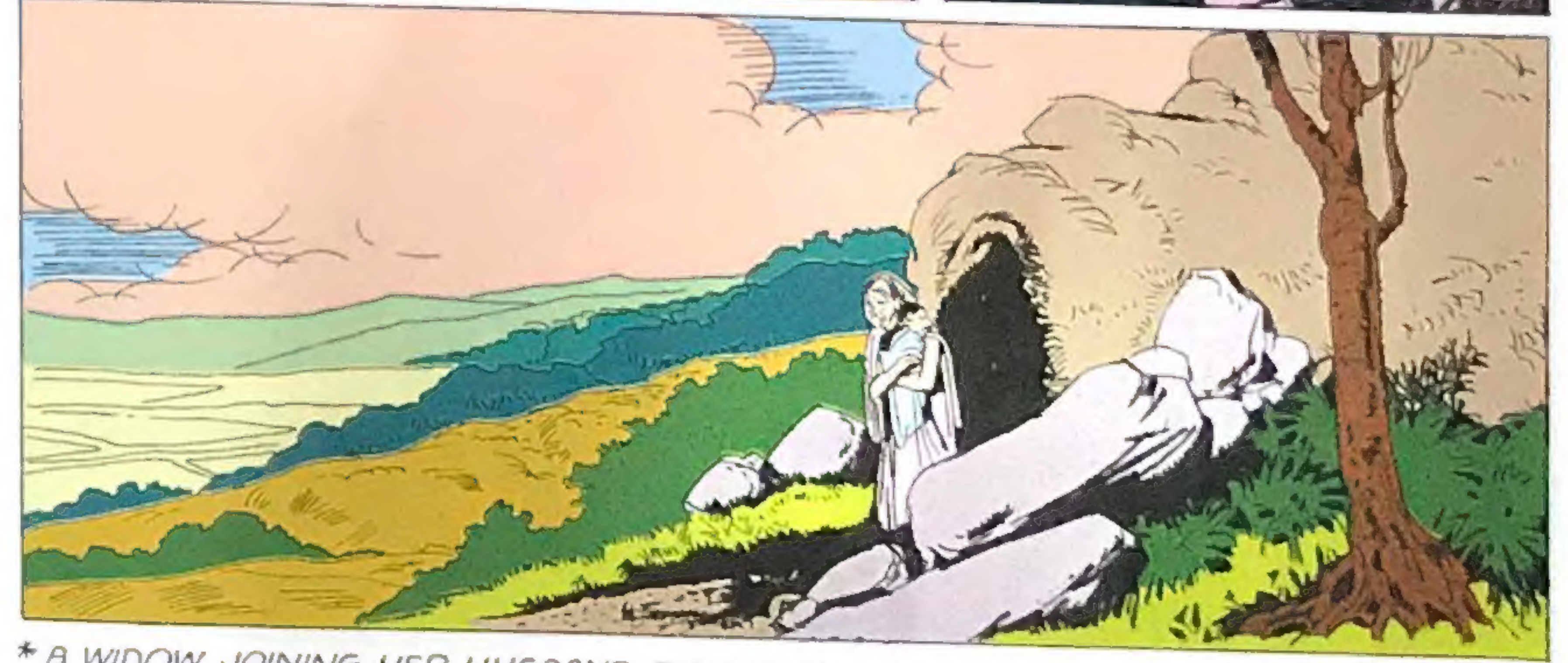


AS WAS THE CUSTOM
IN THOSE DAYS, THE
QUEEN OBSERVED
SATI.*

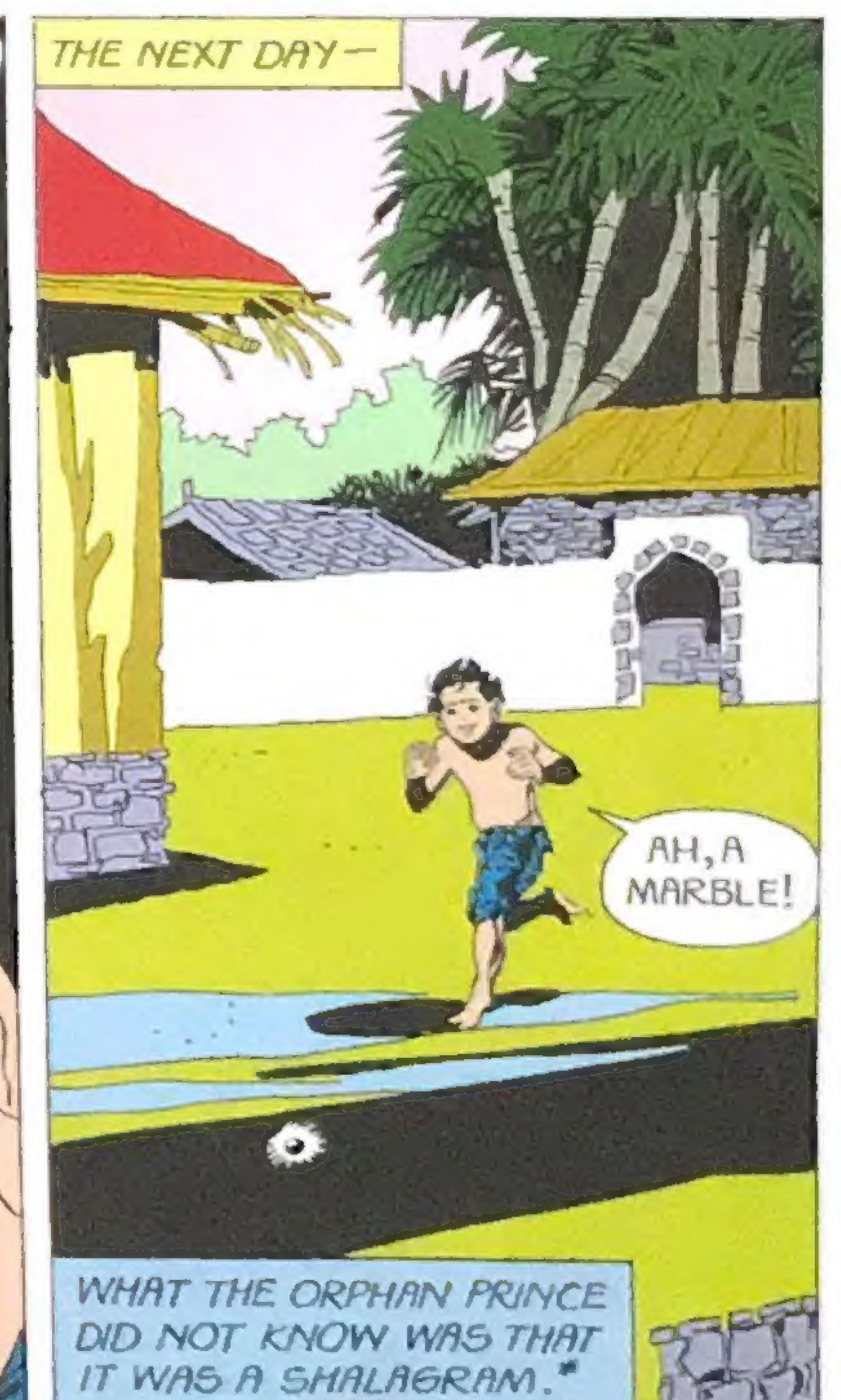
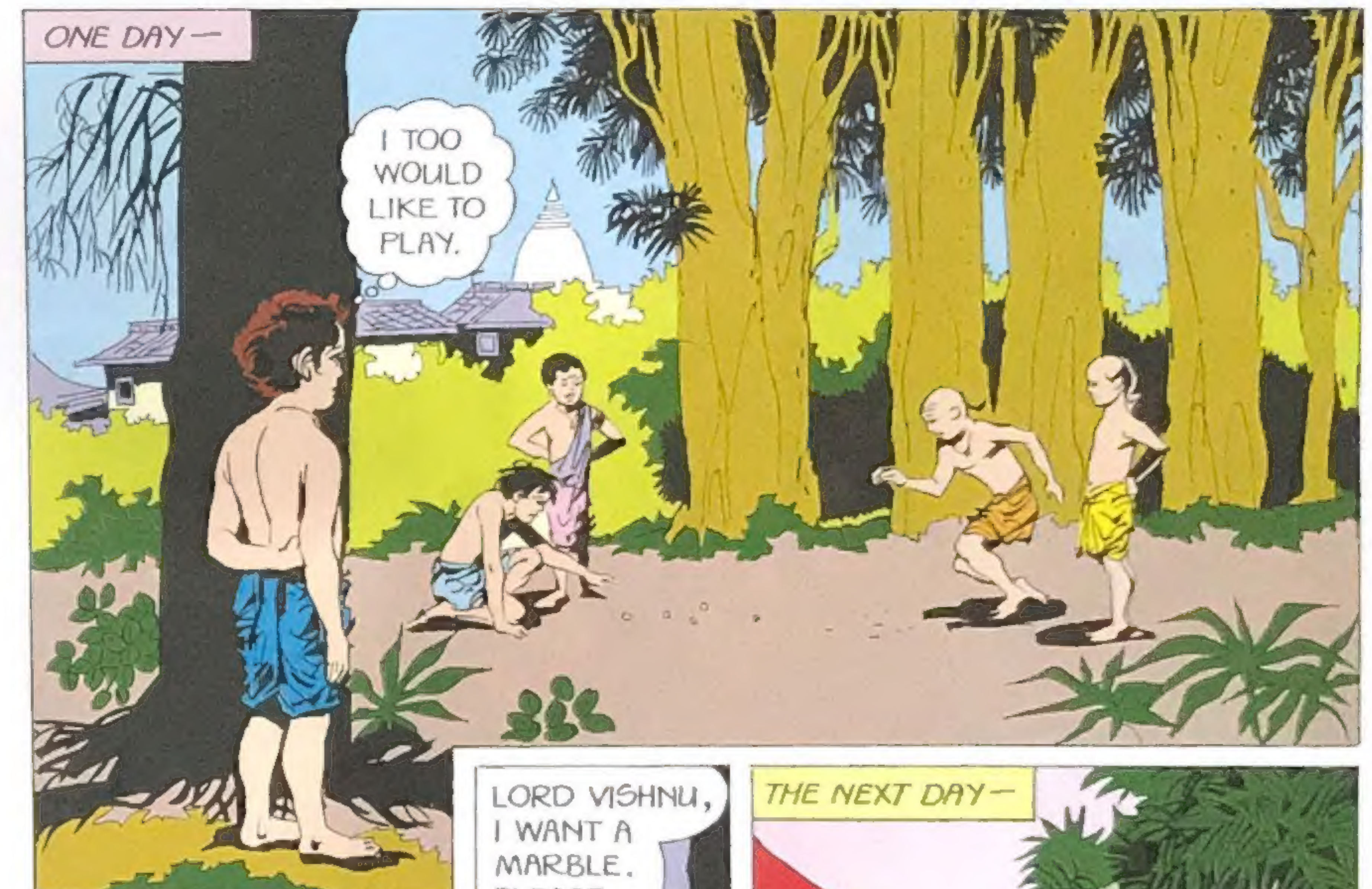
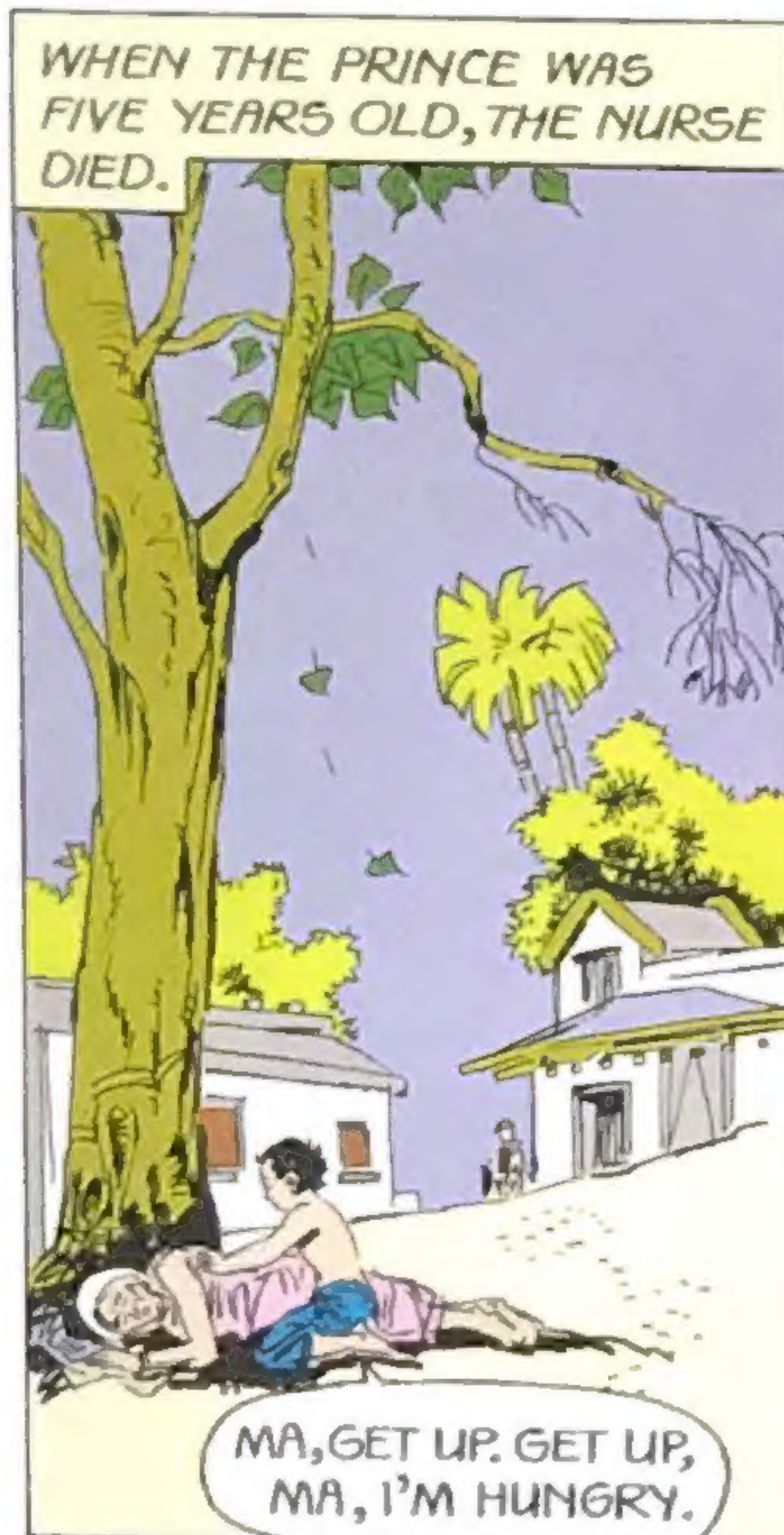
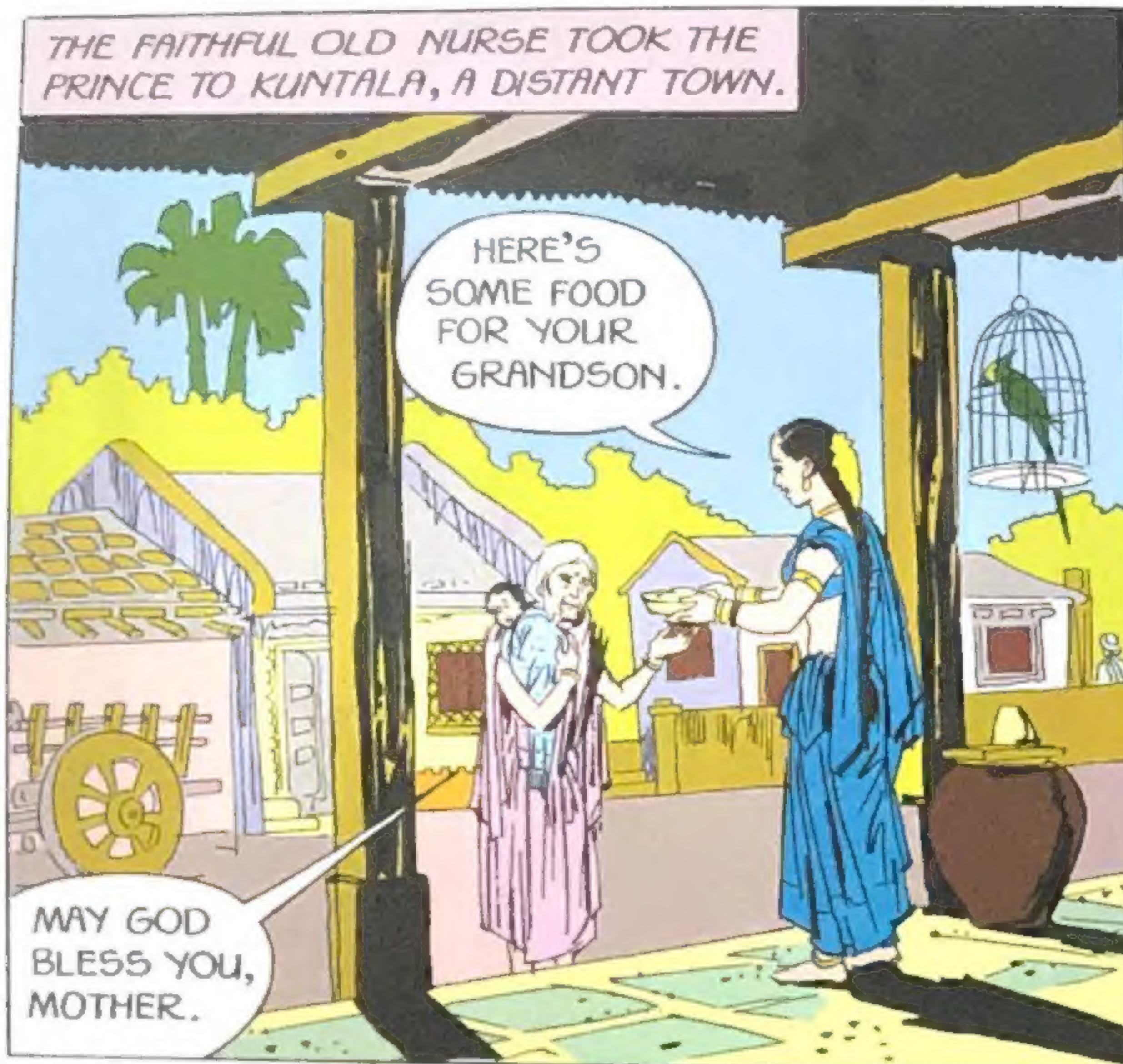


MEANWHILE —

GO OUT THROUGH
THAT TUNNEL. BE
QUICK.

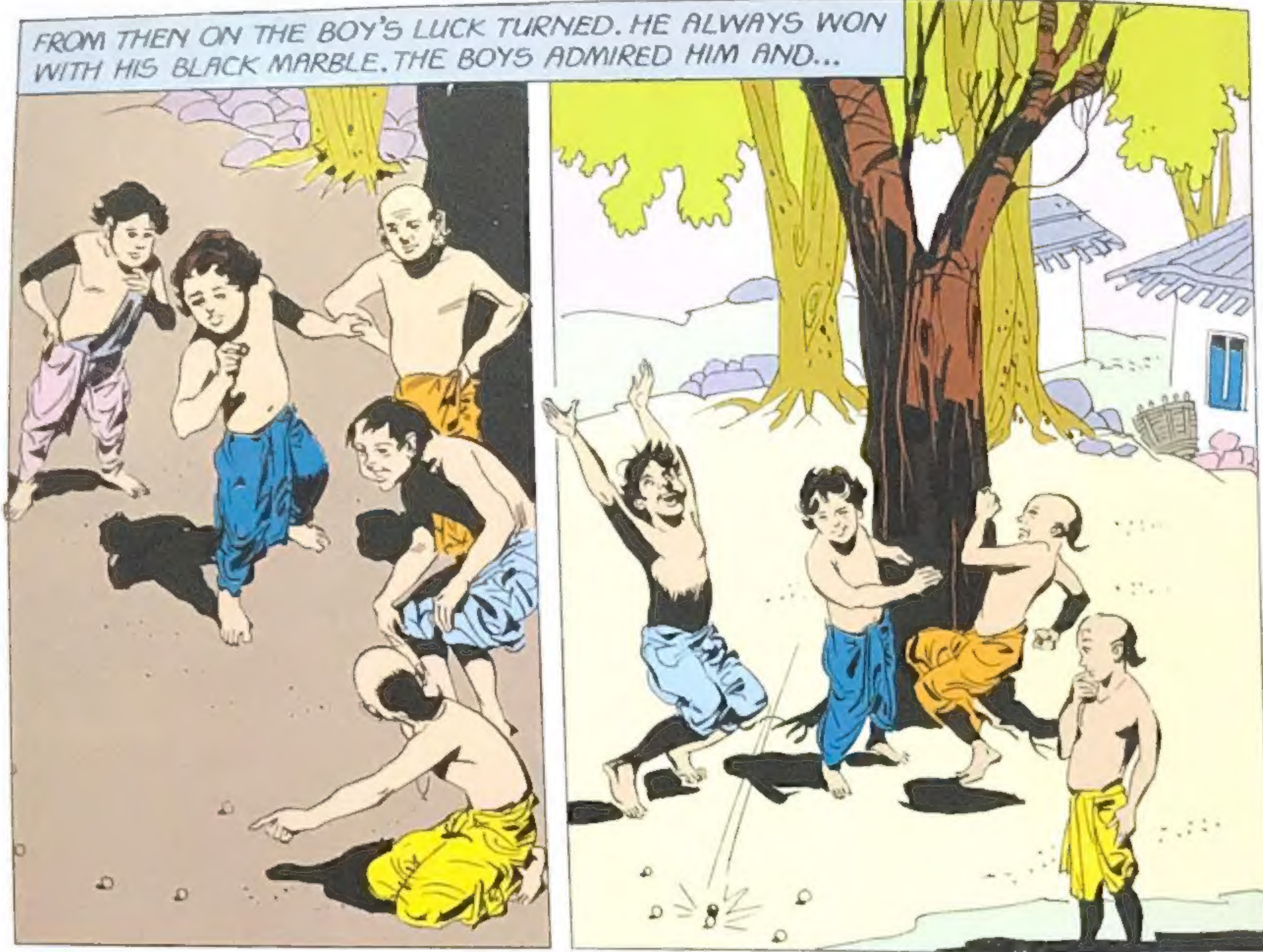


* A WIDOW JOINING HER HUSBAND ON THE FUNERAL PYRE.



* A BLACK STONE, USUALLY ROUND IN SHAPE, CONSIDERED TO BE A REPRESENTATION OF VISHNU.

FROM THEN ON THE BOY'S LUCK TURNED. HE ALWAYS WON WITH HIS BLACK MARBLE. THE BOYS ADMIRED HIM AND...



...VERY SOON HE BECAME THEIR LEADER.



THOUGH THE ORPHAN PRINCE HAD NEITHER HOME NOR FAMILY HE WAS THE HAPPIEST BOY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.



ONE DAY, THE ORPHAN PRINCE AND HIS GANG WERE PLAYING IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE OF DUSHTABUDDHI, THE CHIEF MINISTER OF KUNTALA, WHO WAS SEEING OFF HIS GUEST, A LEARNED BRAHMAN. WHEN THE BRAHMAN SAW THE PRINCE —

WHO IS THAT BOY, DUSHTABUDDHI?

A STREET URCHIN, I SUPPOSE. WHY DO YOU ASK?



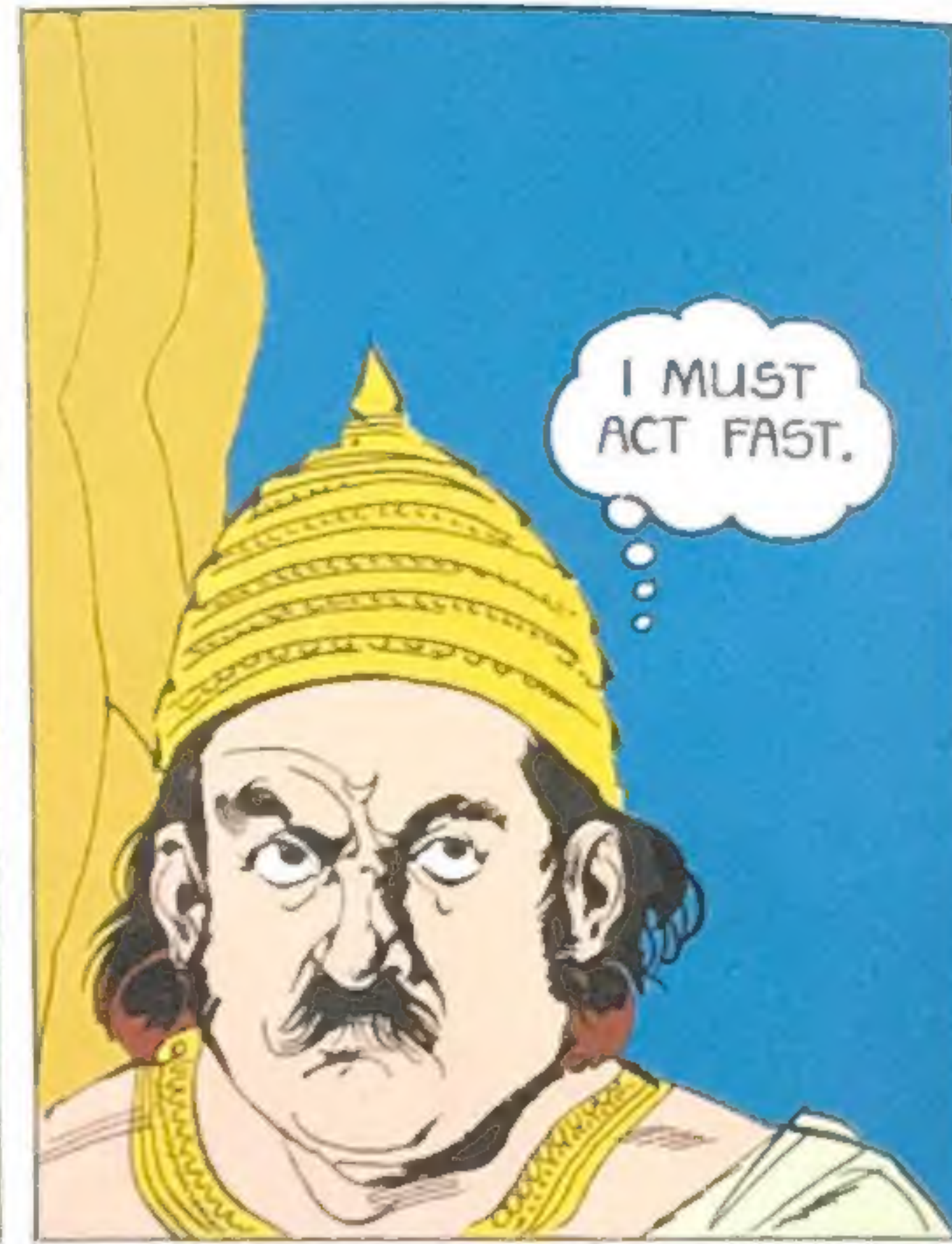
MARK MY WORDS. ONE DAY HE WILL BE THE KING OF KUNTALA. TAKE HIM UNDER YOUR CARE AND GIVE HIM A PROPER EDUCATION.

THE KING OF KUNTALA! HM... M..M..M!

MADANA, MY SON — NOT THIS URCHIN — SHALL BE THE KING OF KUNTALA.



DUSHTABUDDHI HAD DESIGNS ON THE THRONE OF KUNTALA FOR THE KING HAD NO SON.



I MUST ACT FAST.

SOON AFTERWARDS —



DO YOU SEE THAT BOY IN THE CENTRE?

YES, I DO.

SO DO I.



TAKE HIM TO THE FOREST AND KILL HIM. YOU WILL BE WELL REWARDED.

LEAVE IT TO US, SIR. WE WILL DO THE JOB.



RUN!

RUN!

THEY MEAN TO KILL US!



YOU ARE THE ONE WE WANT.



WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

HA! HA! HA!

TO THE HOUSE OF YAMA.*

* GOD OF DEATH

THE KILLERS TOOK THE BOY TO THE FOREST.



* ANOTHER NAME OF LORD VISHNU





BUT THE PRINCE WAS VERY MUCH ALIVE. HE WAS BEING CARED FOR BY THE ANIMALS OF THE FOREST.



ONE DAY, KALINDAKA OF CHANDANAVATI, A VASSAL OF THE KING OF KUNTALA, CAME TO THAT FOREST TO HUNT.



WHEN HE SAW THE BOY —

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE ALONE, MY CHILD? WHOSE SON ARE YOU?

I HAVE NO FATHER OR MOTHER...

...AND I DON'T HAVE A SON.



AND KING KALINDAKA TOOK THE ORPHAN PRINCE TO HIS PALACE.





"CHANDRA" MOON
HASA = SMILE



UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF HIS TEACHER, CHANDRAHASA SOON BECAME AN EXPERT IN THE USE OF WEAPONS...



... AND IN STATECRAFT.

WHEN HE WAS EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD, KING KALINDAKA FORMALLY INSTALLED CHANDRAHASA AS HIS SUCCESSOR.



A FEW DAYS LATER, KALINDAKA SENT FOR CHANDRAHASA.



LATER --

KALINDAKA, WHO WAS THAT YOUNG OFFICER WHO RECEIVED ME AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE?

IT WAS MY SON, CHANDRAHASA.

YOUR SON? BUT YOU DON'T HAVE A SON. HOW DID YOU COME BY THIS ONE?

SOME THIRTEEN YEARS AGO I FOUND HIM ALONE IN THE FOREST. I ADOPTED HIM.

THIRTEEN YEARS AGO? CHANDRAHASA CAN BE NONE OTHER THAN THAT STREET URCHIN. THE KILLERS MUST HAVE DECEIVED ME. WILL THE PREDICTION COME TRUE? NOT IF I CAN HELP IT.

DUSHTABUDDHI IMMEDIATELY HATCHED ANOTHER PLOT TO KILL CHANDRAHASA.

CHANDRAHASA, YOU ARE A DEPENDABLE YOUNG MAN. RIDE TO KUNTALA AND GIVE MY SON, MADANA, THIS LETTER. IT IS HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL.

IT IS MY PRIVILEGE TO BE OF SERVICE TO YOU, SIR.

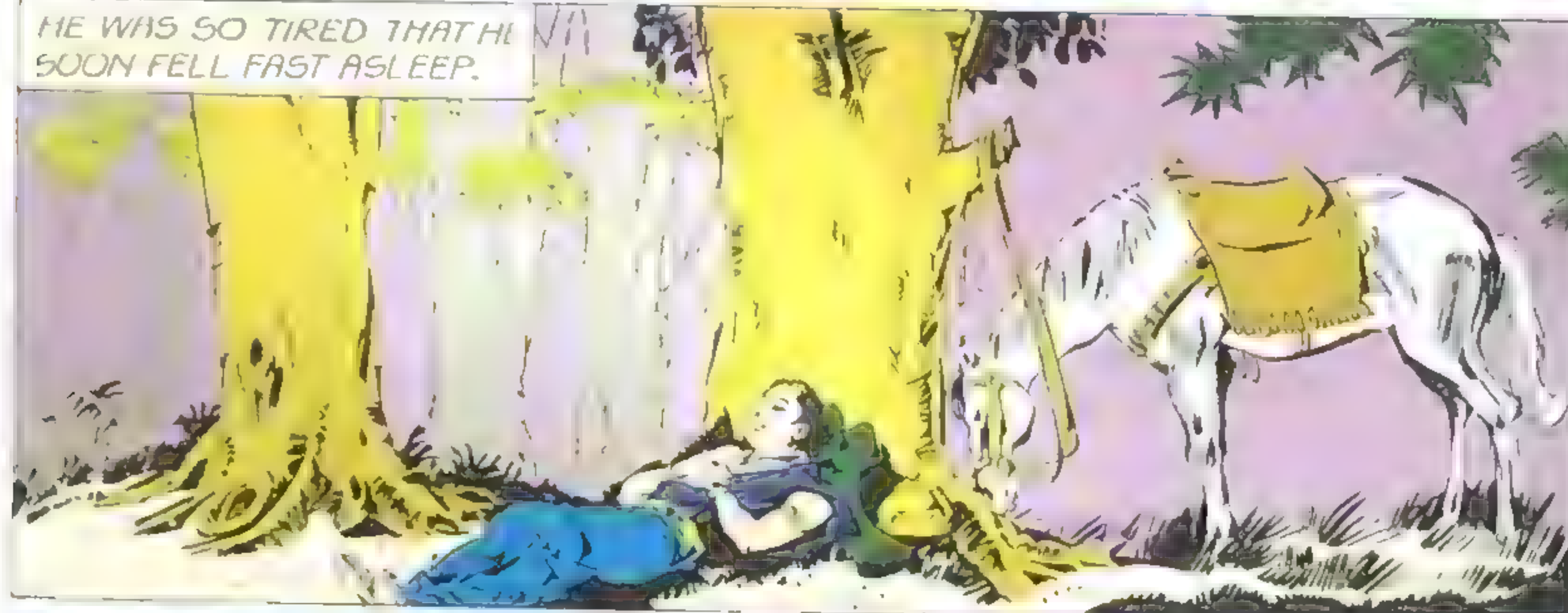
CHANDRAHASA RODE AS FAST AS HE COULD, TOWARDS KUNTALA.

ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY, HE SAW A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN.

HE SUDDENLY REALISED THAT HE WAS TIRED.



HE WAS SO TIRED THAT HE SOON FELL FAST ASLEEP.



JUST THEN, DUSHTABUDDHI'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER, VISHAYA, CAME TO THE GARDEN.



AS THEY WERE GATHERING FLOWERS, SHE STRAYED AWAY FROM HER FRIENDS. SUDDENLY SHE CHANCED TO SEE THE PRINCE.

HOW HANDSOME HE IS! WHO COULD HE BE? HE HAS A LETTER WITH HIM!



THE LETTER! THE LETTER WILL SURELY REVEAL HIS IDENTITY.



OVERCOME BY CURIOSITY SHE TOOK IT...

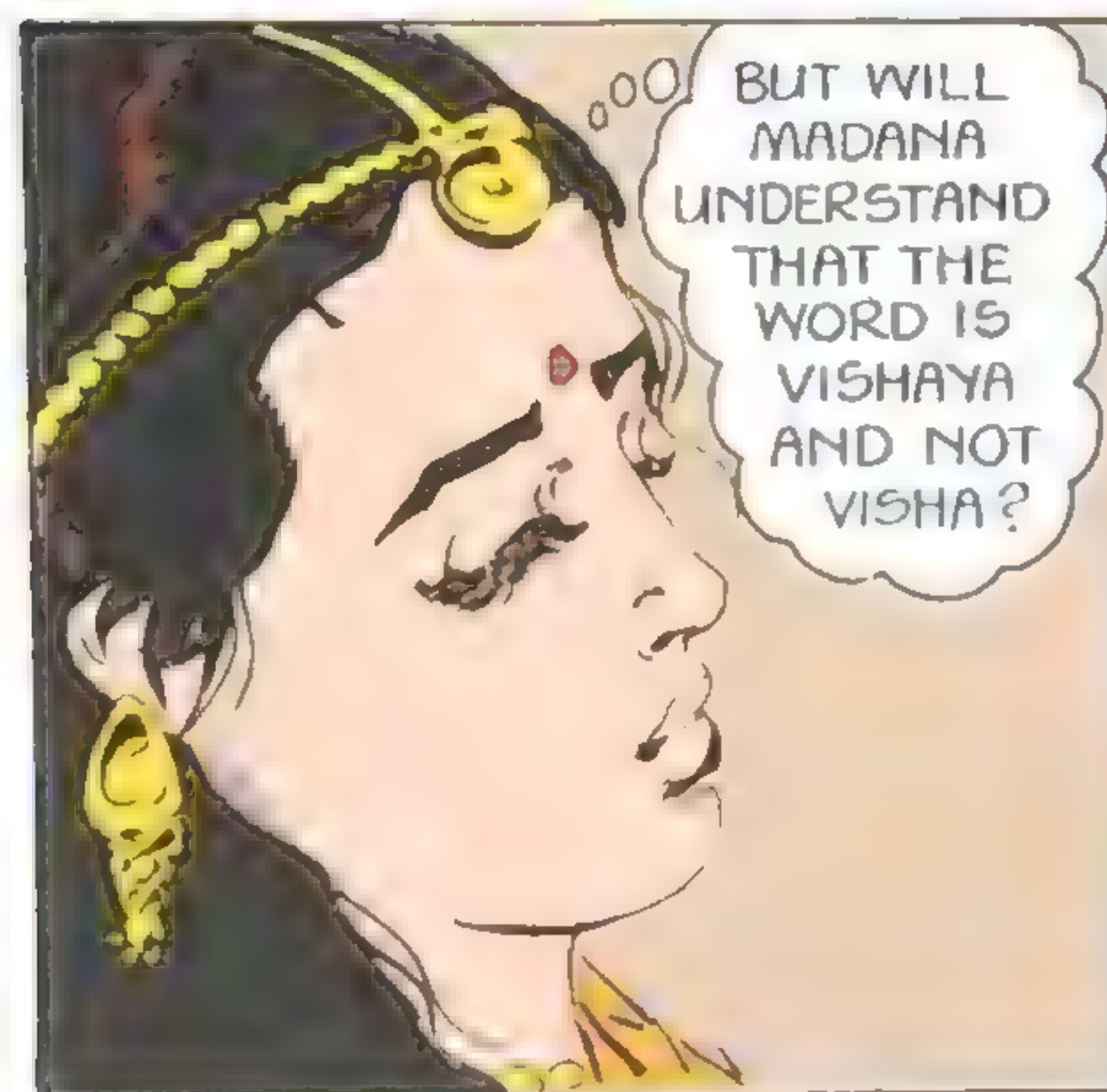


...AND READ IT.

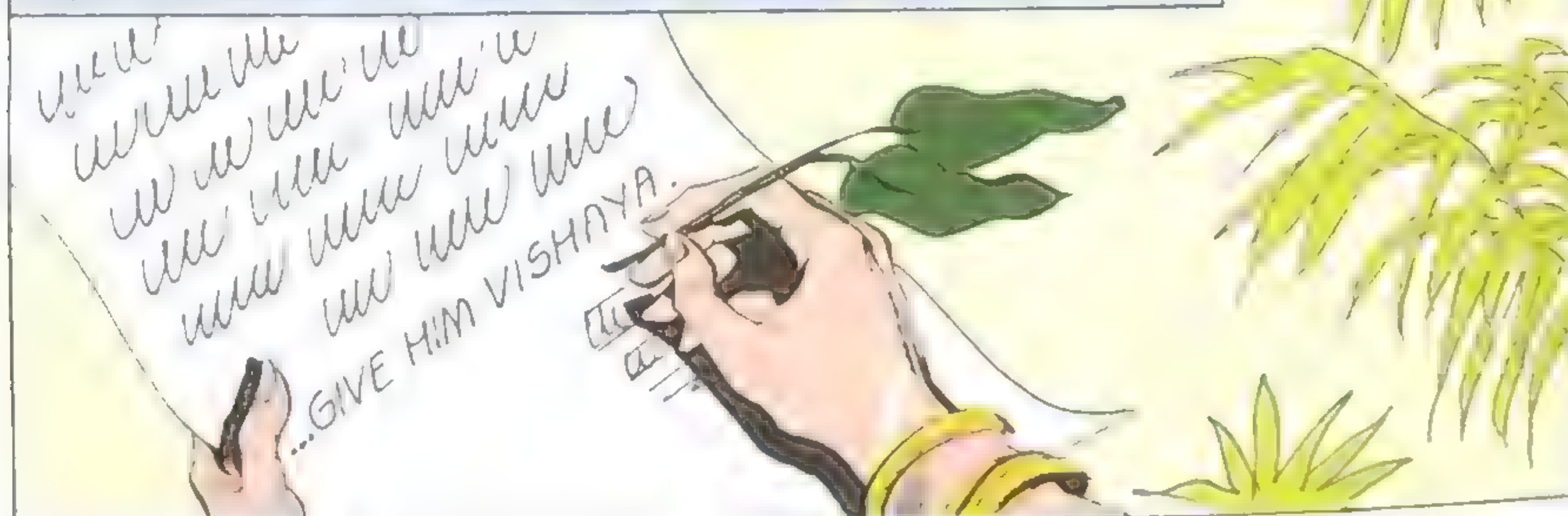
DEAR MADANA, THE BEARER OF THIS LETTER IS DESTINED TO BECOME THE KING OF KUNTALA. THEREFORE, WITHOUT WAITING FOR MY RETURN, GIVE HIM VISHA*

VISHA? THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE. I KNOW... IN HIS HURRY FATHER HAS MIS-SPELT MY NAME.

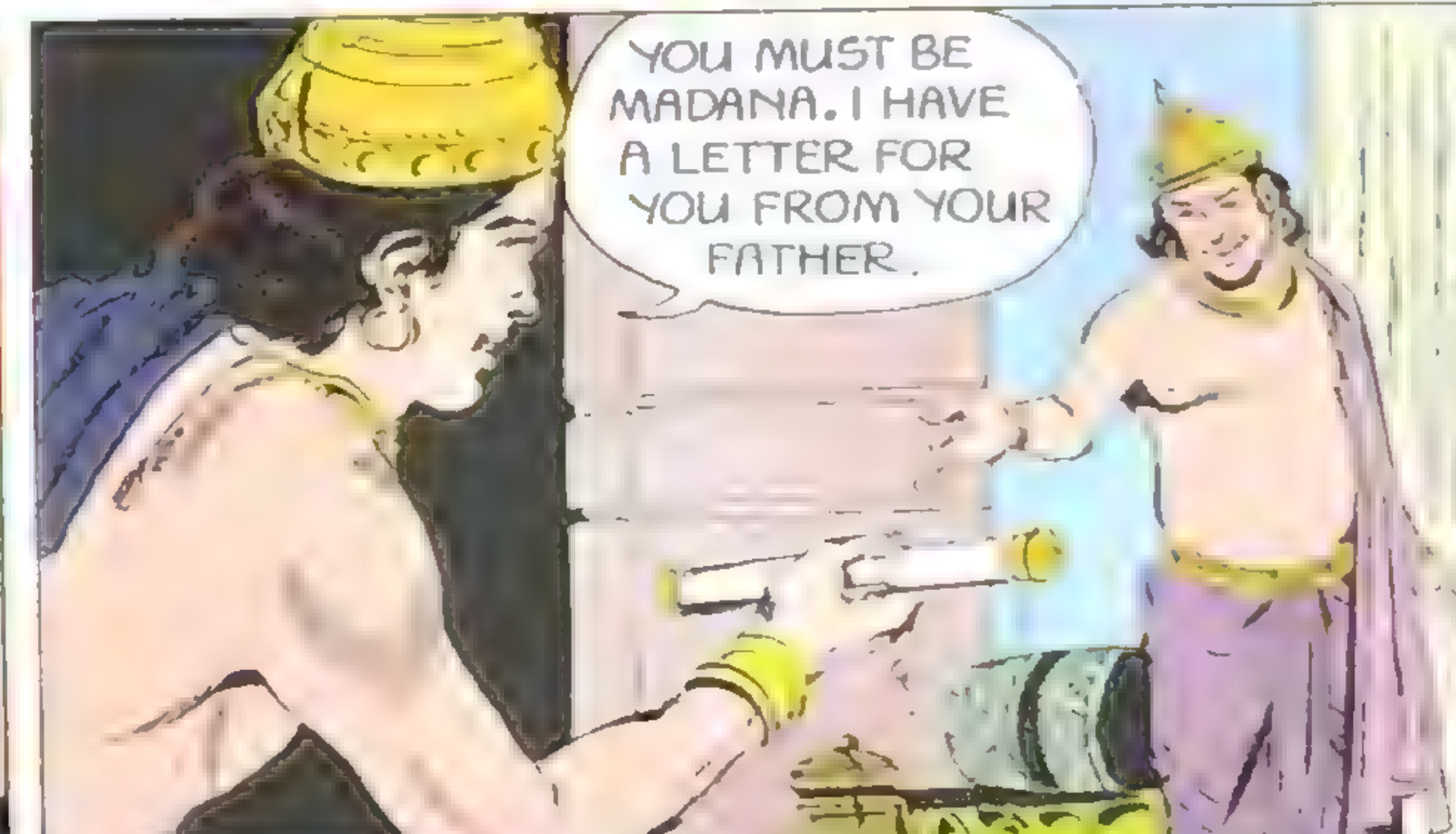
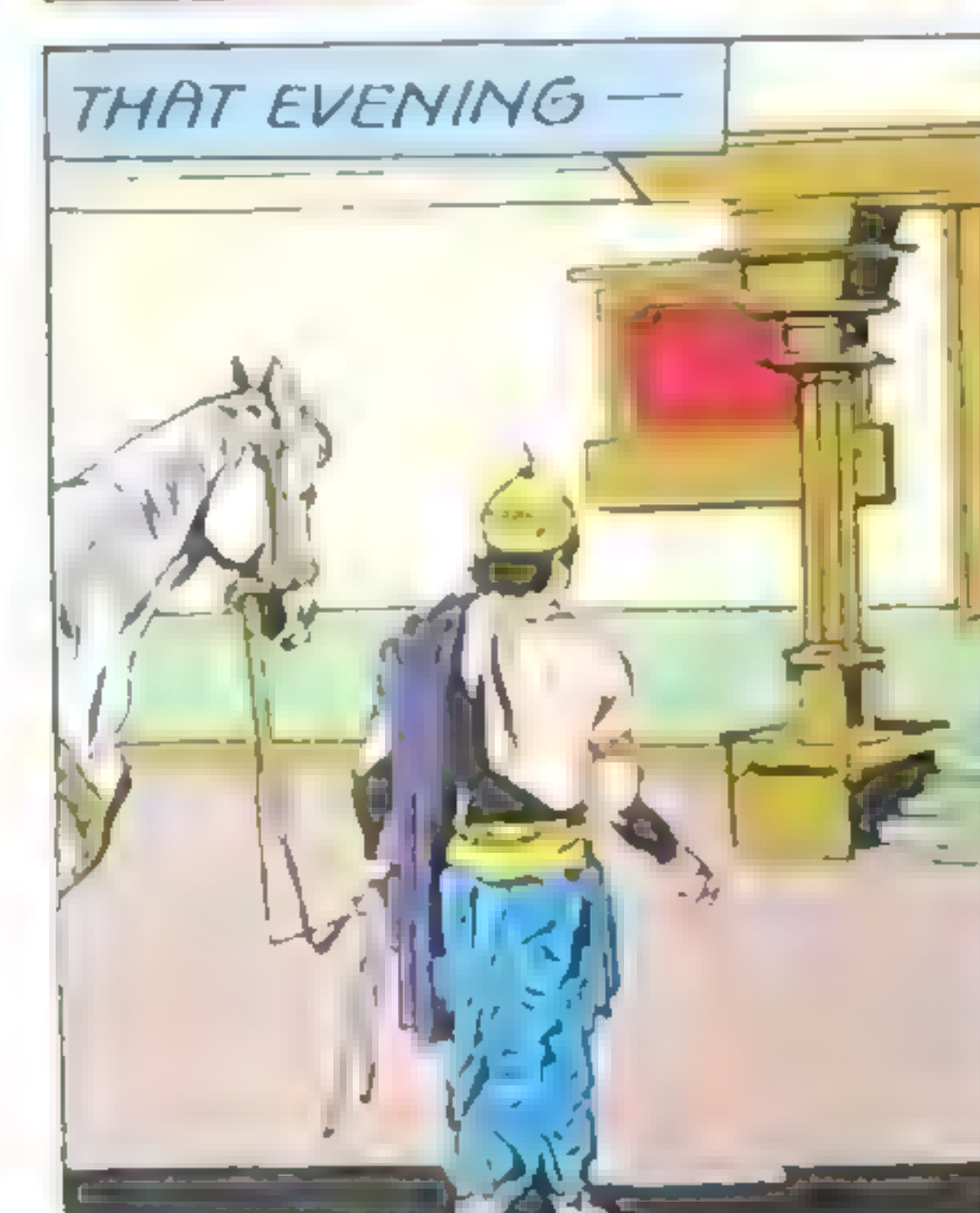




USING A STALK AND HER KAAJAL* SHE ADDED "YA" TO VISHA.

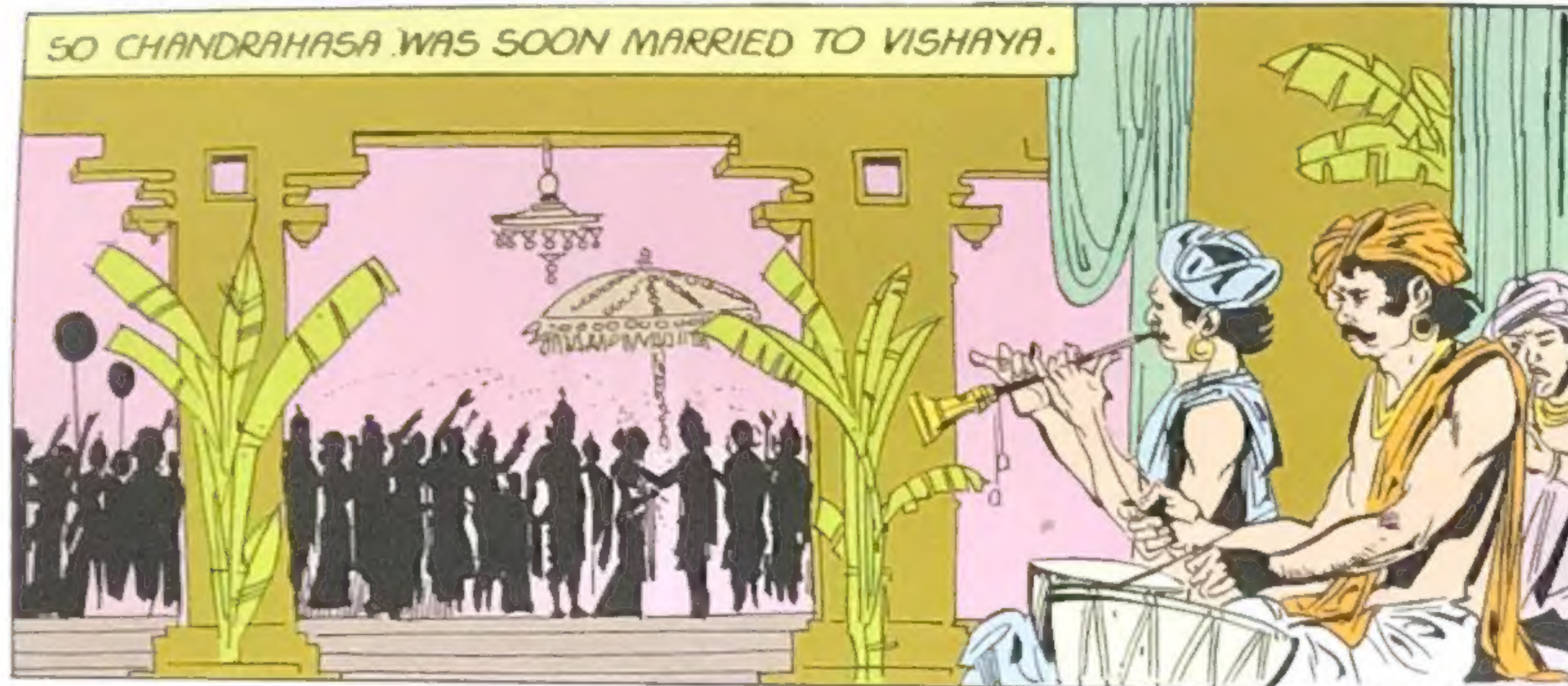


*A GREASY BLACK EYE COSMETIC.

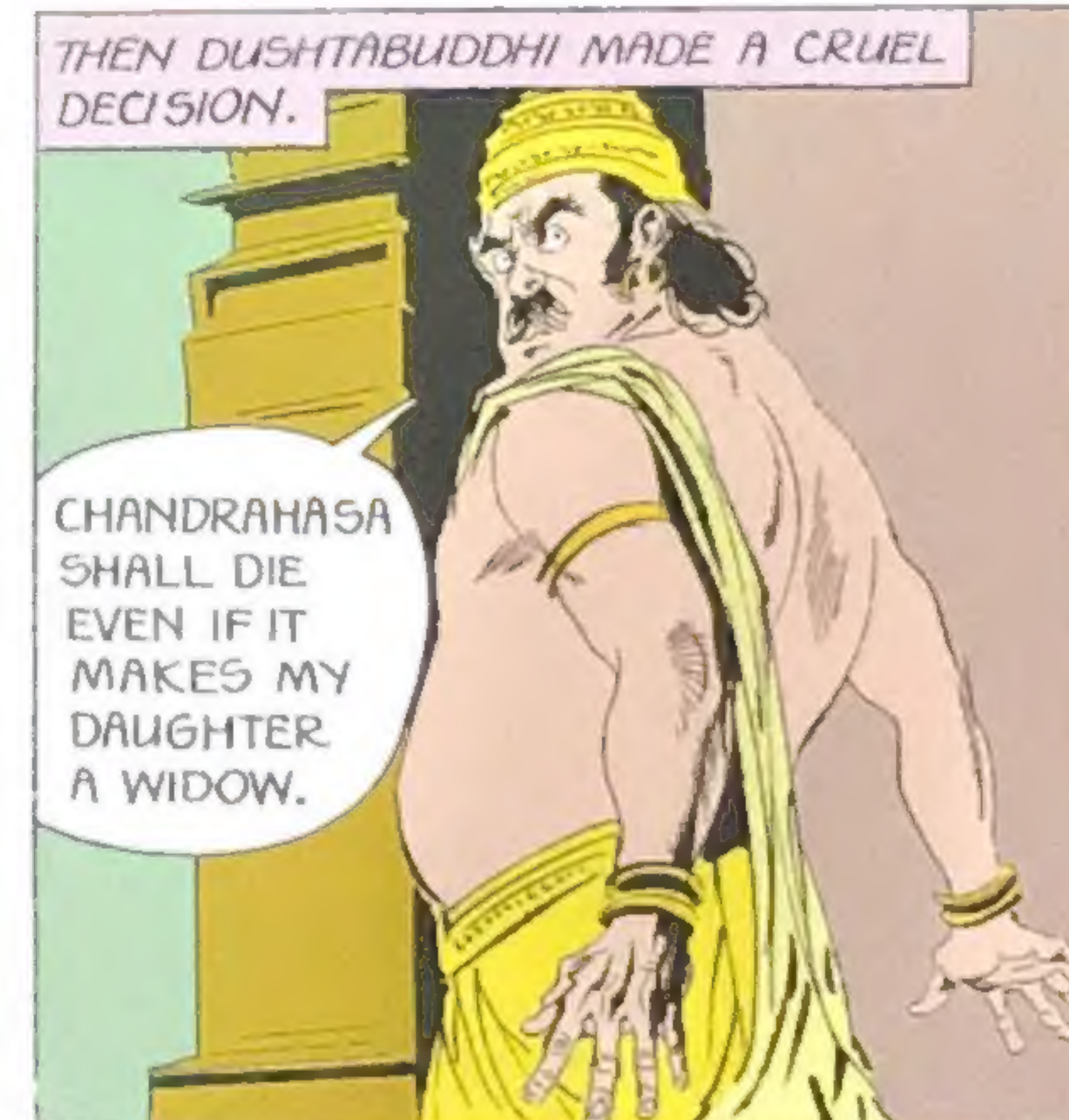


* THE HINDU GOD OF LOVE.

SO CHANDRAHASA WAS SOON MARRIED TO VISHAYA.



DUSHTABUDDHI RETURNED A FEW DAYS LATER.



MEANWHILE, THE OLD KING OF KUNTALA SENT FOR THE ROYAL PRIEST.

WHEN I LOOKED INTO THE MIRROR, I SAW A HEADLESS REFLECTION OF MY BODY. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN, REVERED SIR?

IT SIGNIFIES THAT YOUR END IS DRAWING NEAR. O KING, THINK OF SHRI HARI IN YOUR LAST DAYS ON EARTH.

BUT SIR, MY BELOVED DAUGHTER IS NOT YET MARRIED.

DON'T DESPAIR, O KING. WHY DON'T YOU MARRY YOUR DAUGHTER, TOO, TO CHANDRAHASA, THE NOBLE SON-IN-LAW OF DUSHTABUDDHI?

A GOOD PROPOSAL. SEND FOR HIM AT ONCE, SIR.

MADANA, WHERE IS CHANDRAHASA? THE KING WOULD LIKE TO SEE HIM, IMMEDIATELY.

I'LL GO AND TELL HIM, SIR.

CHANDRAHASA!

THE KING WANTS TO SEE YOU.

BUT I AM ON MY WAY TO THE TEMPLE.

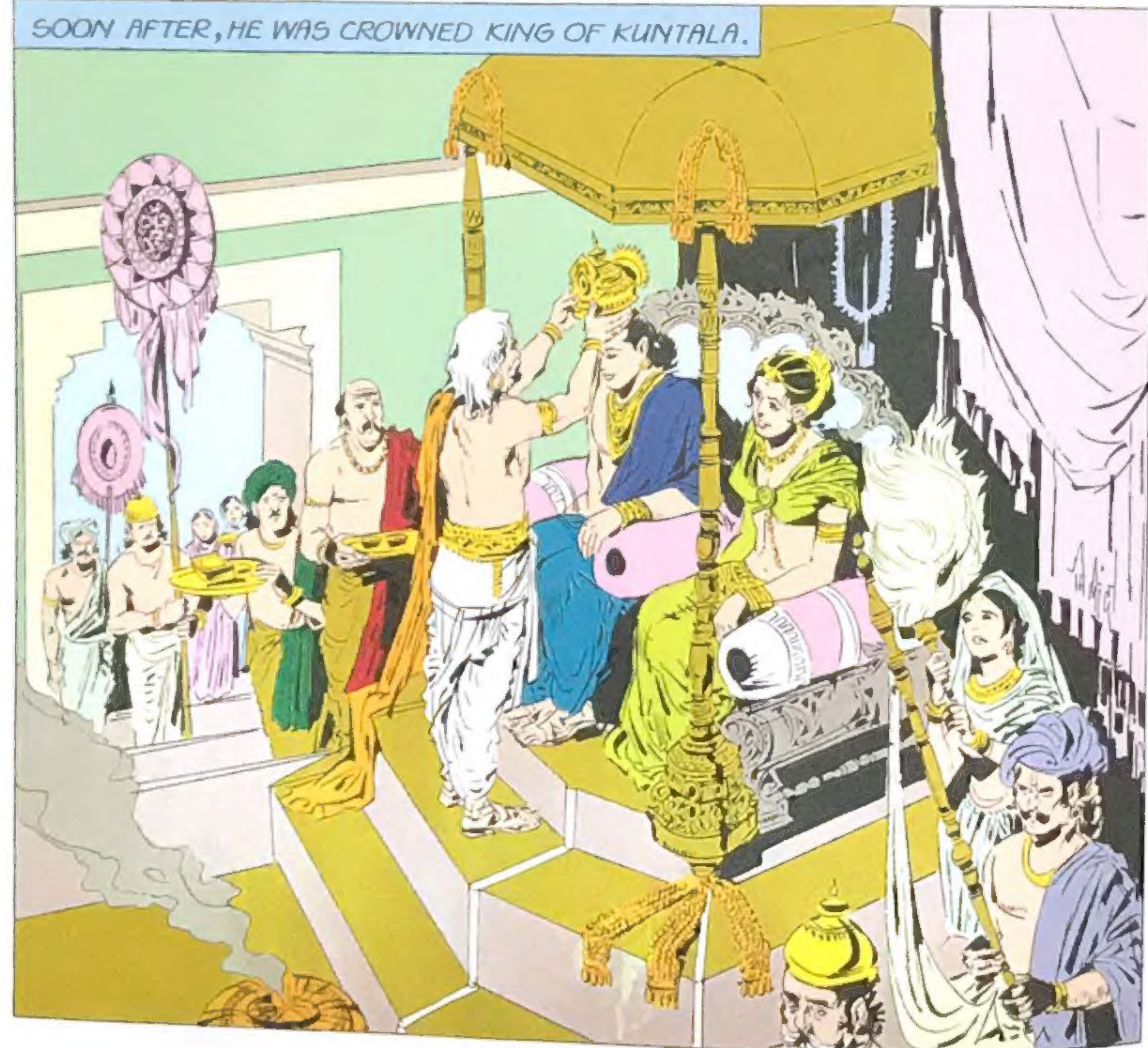
LET ME GO TO THE TEMPLE. YOU MUST HURRY TO THE PALACE. TAKE MY HORSE.

ALL RIGHT, MADANA, IF THAT IS YOUR WISH.

AS SOON AS CHANDRAHASA REACHED THE PALACE, HE WAS MARRIED TO THE PRINCESS.



SOON AFTER, HE WAS CROWNED KING OF KUNTALA.



THEN CHANDRAHASA AND HIS SECOND BRIDE VISITED DUSHTABUDDHI.



THE KING SENT FOR ME. SO MADANA WENT IN MY PLACE, SIR.

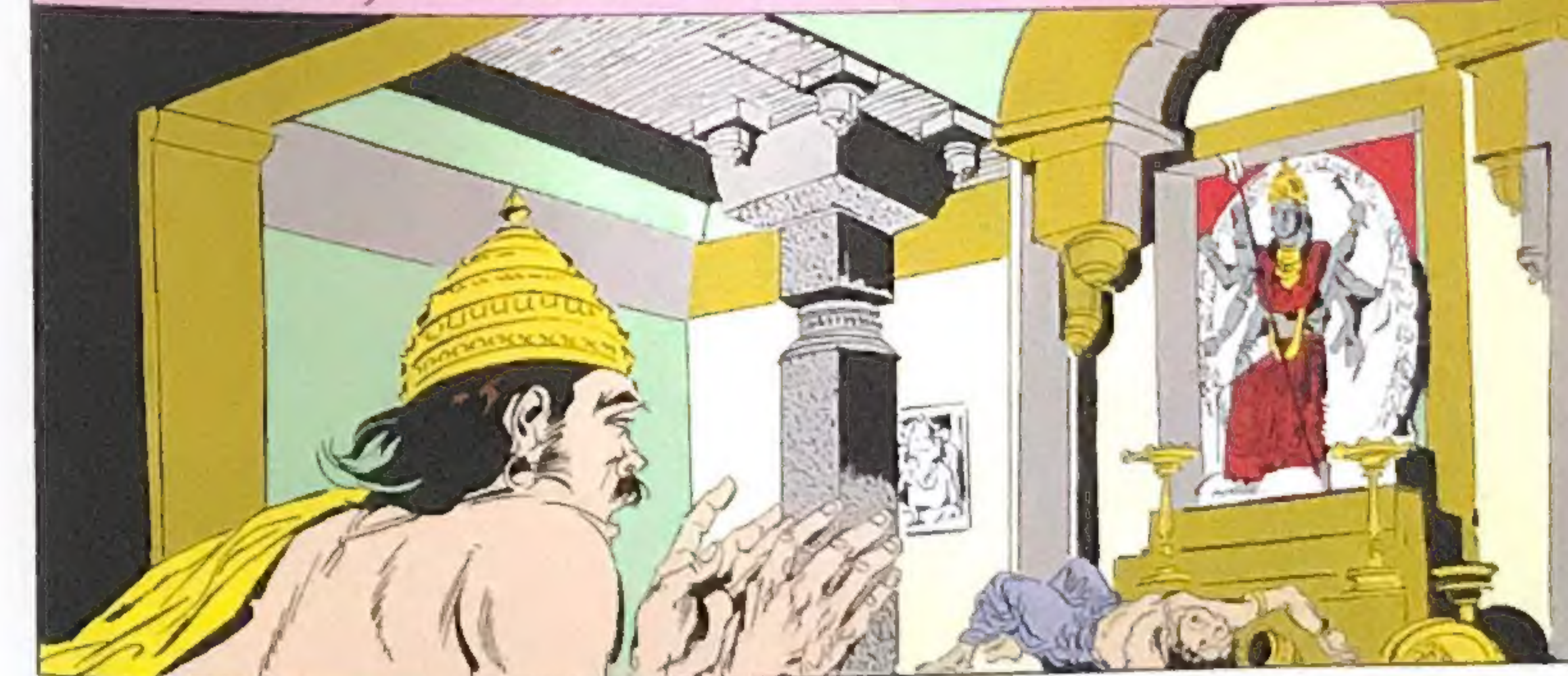
WHAT! MADANA GONE TO THE TEMPLE! OH! GOD! NO!



DUSHTABUDDHI HURRIED TO THE TEMPLE, RUNNING AS FAST AS HE COULD.

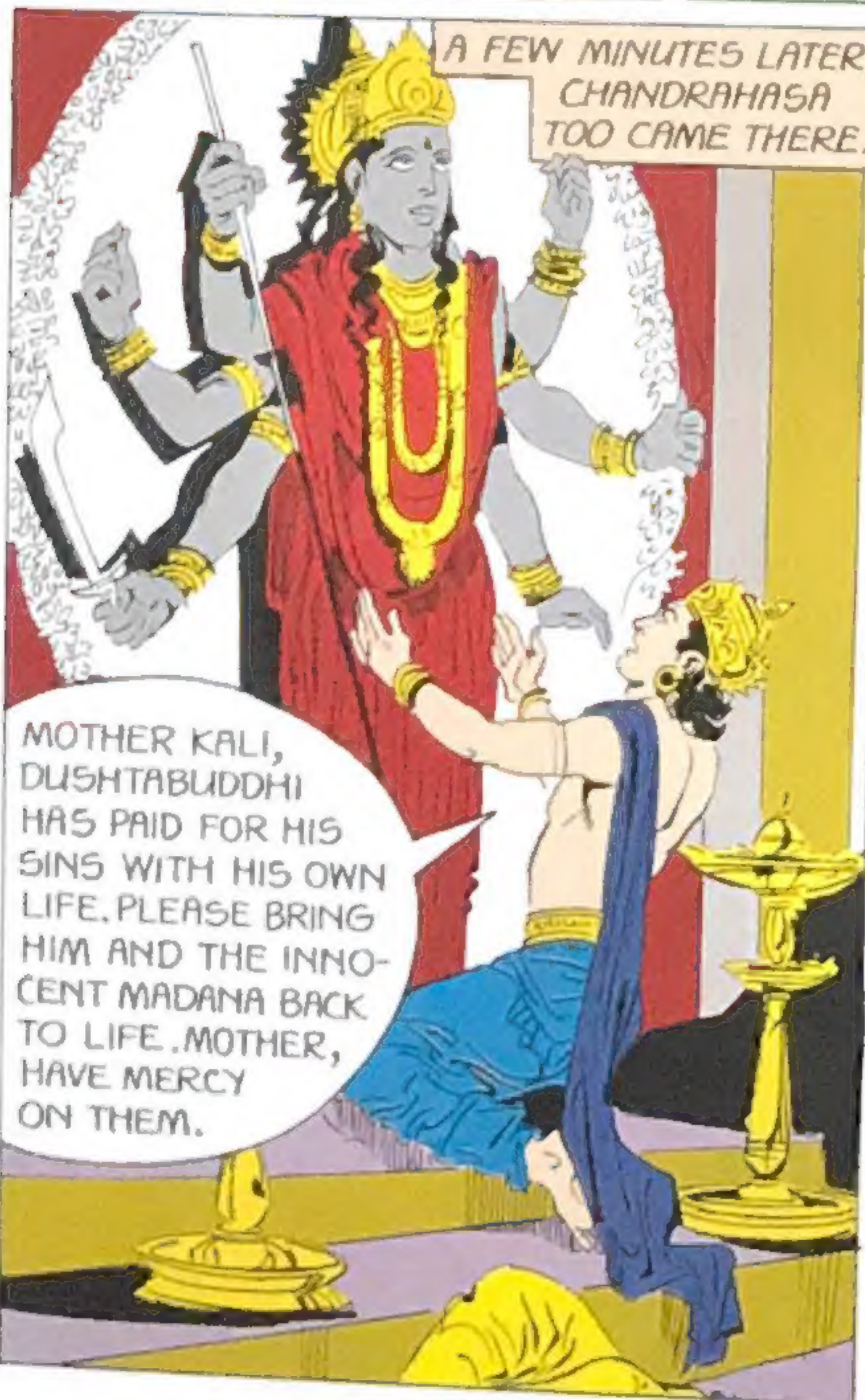


BUT HE WAS TOO LATE. THE KILLERS, WHO WERE ORDERED BY HIM TO KILL THE LONELY YOUNG WORSHIPPER VISITING THE TEMPLE THAT EVENING, HAD KILLED MADANA, WHO HAD GONE THERE IN PLACE OF CHANDRAHASA.





OVERCOME BY GRIEF AND REPENTANCE, DUSHTABUDDHI STABBED HIMSELF.



A FEW MINUTES LATER, CHANDRAHASA TOO CAME THERE.

MOTHER KALI, DUSHTABUDDHI HAS PAID FOR HIS SINS WITH HIS OWN LIFE. PLEASE BRING HIM AND THE INNOCENT MADANA BACK TO LIFE. MOTHER, HAVE MERCY ON THEM.

WHEN HIS PRAYER REMAINED UNHEARD —

THEN ACCEPT MY LIFE, MOTHER KALI, AND LET THE FATHER AND SON LIVE.

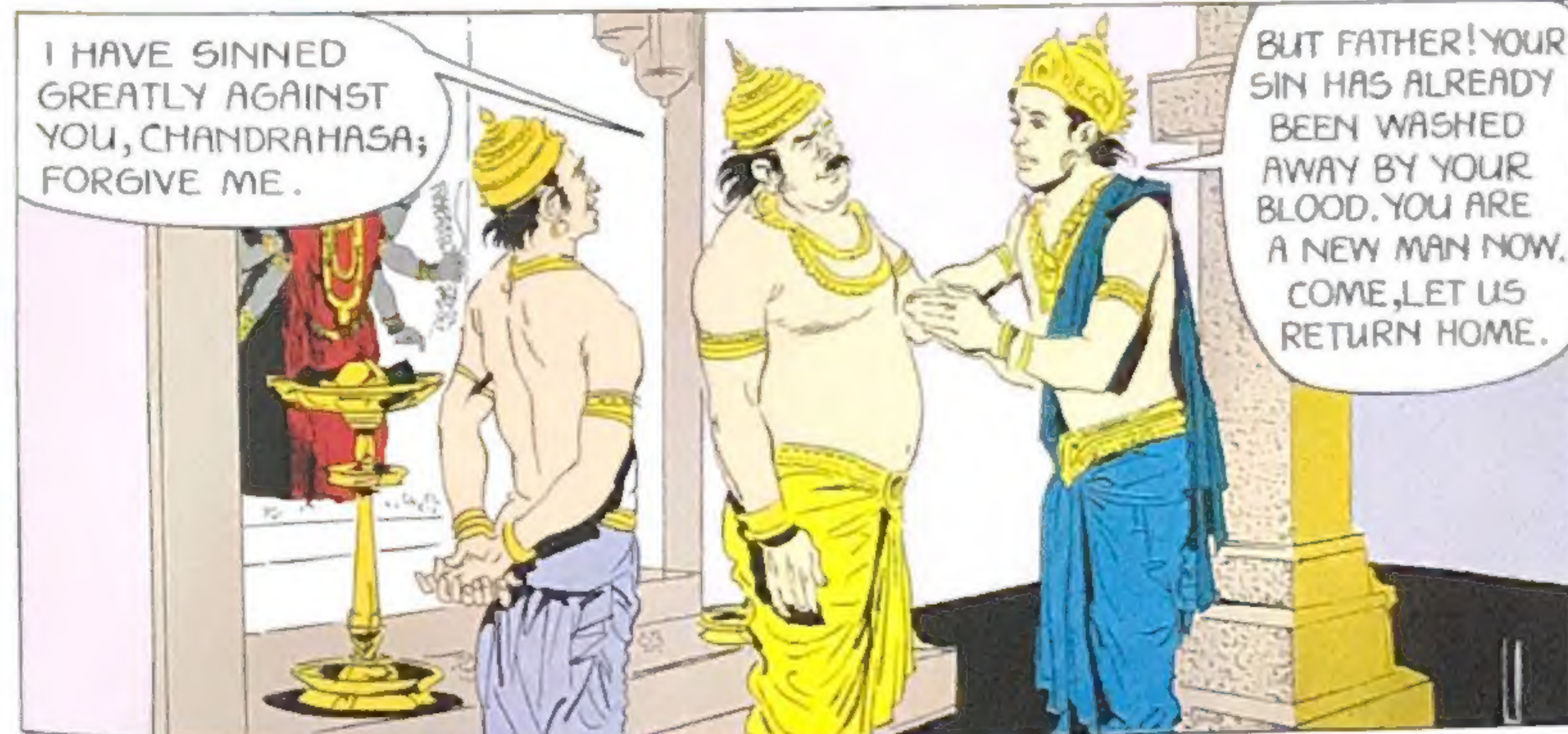


JUST THEN —

WAIT! I WILL NOT ALLOW ONE LIKE YOU TO DIE. I'LL BRING THEM BACK TO LIFE.



I HAVE SINNED GREATLY AGAINST YOU, CHANDRAHASA; FORGIVE ME.



BUT FATHER! YOUR SIN HAS ALREADY BEEN WASHED AWAY BY YOUR BLOOD. YOU ARE A NEW MAN NOW. COME, LET US RETURN HOME.

CHANDRAHASA RULED OVER KUNTALA AND CHANDANAVATI AND LIVED HAPPILY WITH HIS TWO WIVES.

